

church sanctuary and restrooms, parking lot, technology has been added to Leatha Walls Educational Complex and the purchase of an additional church minibus. Most importantly, Pastor Cheeks has provided a vision into the future, with fervent prayer, focused commitment and faithful service united with our Lord and Savior, "One in Jesus."

True Light Missionary Baptist Church has made significant contributions to the community, state and Nation by being actively involved in the Midtown Community, the Jackson District Missionary Baptist Association, the Jackson District Congress of Christian Education, General Missionary Baptist State Convention of Mississippi and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the history of True Light Missionary Baptist Church.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA PHILHARMONIC'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 8, 2022*

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, today I honor the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic as they celebrate their 50th anniversary. Under the direction of Music Director Mélisse Brunet and Executive Director Nancy Sanderson, the NEPA Philharmonic is a premier symphony orchestra bringing high caliber pops performances and classical music to Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Until the late 1960s, Northeastern Pennsylvania was home to two independent orchestras in Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. In early 1969, the boards of the two symphonies began to discuss the idea of increased cooperation between the two groups, and by October, a goal was set to have a joint orchestra give four performances in each city during the 1970–71 season. In January of 1970, the joint venture announced: a two-year trial period of a united symphony orchestra to be called the Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA) Philharmonic.

The new orchestra was under the direction of Scranton's, Beatrice Brown, then one of the few female conductors in the country, and Wilkes-Barre's Ferdinand Liva. After Brown's departure in 1971, conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony, Polish-born Thomas Michalak, was hired as the first official music director after the Philharmonic's historic incorporation. The first performances were held in October 1972 at the Irem Temple in Wilkes-Barre and at the Masonic Temple in Scranton, featuring Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Schuman's Piano Concerto in A Minor.

In 1979, Hugh Wolff, educated at Harvard University and the Peabody Institute, took over the baton. Under Wolff's direction, the orchestra soared to new heights and established its reputation as a prestigious symphony. In 1982, the Philharmonic gained statewide recognition during a televised performance of a work commissioned for the Commonwealth's tercentennial. During the early 1980s, the Philharmonic also began to attract world renowned guest artists.

In 1986, Wolff left the symphony, and the board appointed London-Born and Cambridge-

educated Hugh Keegan to the podium. Over 14 seasons, he grew the orchestra into one of the country's best regional orchestras with an impressively broad repertoire. Following Keegan's tenure, the orchestra continued to thrive under the tutelage of Clyde Mitchell and later Lawrence Loh.

Today, the orchestra continues to strive for and deliver the highest level of musical excellence and remains the only fully professional symphony in the region. The Philharmonic also provides arts outreach and education to foster the next generation of musical talent.

I am honored to join with the NEPA Philharmonic to celebrate 50 years of making music in Northeastern Pennsylvania. I look forward to seeing their future musical accomplishments, and I wish them great success as they continue to bring exceptional performances to our theaters and concert halls.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF LIFE-TIME EDUCATOR, MARY CALTAGIRONE

**HON. KATHY CASTOR**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 8, 2022*

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the life and contributions of Mary Mortellaro Caltagirone, a beloved member of the Tampa Bay community, who passed away on April 7, 2022, at the age of 99 after a lifetime of service as a devoted mother, educator and community volunteer.

A Tampa native of Sicilian decent, Mary grew up attending local public schools before leaving home to attend college, a rarity for a woman of her background at that time. Mary attended college at Florida College for Women, now Florida State University, and graduated in three years with a Bachelor of Science in Spanish and Math in 1943. In addition to this, she earned a certificate in Elementary Education from the University of Tampa and was a member of three honor societies. Mary took all of the education and experience she gained and brought it back home to serve her community in Tampa. She went on to teach for 40 years in Hillsborough County public schools at various grade levels and I am very grateful and proud to have been one of her students myself.

Mary retired from teaching in 1983, though her promotion of education and her community involvement only grew from there. Honoring her Sicilian heritage and Ybor City roots, Mary was a founding member of Lucerna and its offshoot organization, Pan American University Women (PAUW), whose mission it is to unite women of Latin decent who are graduates of institutions of higher learning, to promote fellowship, encourage education and professional accomplishments and to provide charitable contributions to the Tampa community. Mary served as a four-time president and was twice honored as PAUW Woman of the Year. Other community organizations and philanthropic involvements of hers included the Italian Club and their Ladies Auxiliary, Sons of Italy, St. John's Presbyterian Church, Spanish Lyric Theater, Judea-Christian Health Clinic and the Ybor City Museum, where she amassed over 1000 hours of service! Mary's incredible devotion to these groups was ex-

tremely appreciated by their community members. In 2005, she was presented with the Italian Woman of Excellence Award for Cultural and Civic Involvement and in 2007, she was named Person of the Year for Outstanding Service by St. John's Presbyterian Church.

Mary was a truly selfless and loving individual, and her legacy will continue to live through her sons Sam A. and Vincent G. Caltagirone (Sue), former daughters-in-law, Norma Tomasello Caltagirone and Carol Bond Caltagirone, nephews Vincent and Douglas Mortellaro (Tracy), cousin George Garcia (Bonnie), grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many more extended family. Her memory will truly be a blessing for her family, her students and all in our Tampa Bay community who have known her, learned from her and worked alongside her.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of my neighbors in Tampa Bay and the citizens of Florida, I am proud to honor Mary Mortellaro Caltagirone for her lifelong dedication to education and for her demonstrations of service above self. All in our community are eternally grateful for her immense contributions. Her legacy will live on and inspire many others in the Tampa Bay community and beyond for years to come.

HONORING PASTOR ROBIN ROBINSON FOR HER SERVICE TO KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

**HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 8, 2022*

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding leadership and proud legacy of community service of Pastor Robin Robinson of Bakersfield, California.

Born in Bakersfield and raised in Oklahoma, Pastor Robinson returned to her roots in Kern County when she was 15 years old, moving back to the Golden State to attend Arvin High School. After graduation, she went straight into the workforce, earning a California State contractor's license to start out and becoming a small business owner within the oil industry. By age 26, Pastor Robinson joined Canyon Hills Church as Bus Director—a move that would alter the trajectory of both the church and Pastor Robinson's life forever.

Transformed by the word of God while at Canyon Hills Church, Pastor Robinson decided to enroll in seminary and embark on a life of service. Upon graduation, she served as the church's Children's Pastor for ten years, sharing the Gospel with our community's youth. Because of her dedication and devotion to the congregation, she later became the Outreach Pastor, the Junior High Pastor which she served as for 19 years, and then the Adult Ministries Pastor, helping to lead the congregation with strength and compassion.

In 2019, Pastor Robinson accepted an offer to lead CityServe Kern County, a nonprofit that helps connect and empower local churches to better support the needs of our community. As the Community Development and Church Engagement Director, Pastor Robinson coordinated with businesses, local partners, and 120 churches in Kern County to help the most vulnerable receive much-needed food, secure housing, and obtain critical job

training. CityServe's work grew tenfold during the coronavirus pandemic and in 2020, the organization provided over 150,000 meals and supplies to residents, due in large part to Pastor Robinson's work, which led to CityServe being recognized as the 2021 Nonprofit of the Year for California's 16th Senate District.

Throughout her life, Pastor Robinson has led with grace, humility, and a steadfast devotion to God and community. Though she will be greatly missed in Bakersfield, I am confident she will continue to uplift and transform the people around her. On behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of California, I would like to thank Pastor Robinson for her decades of service to our community and I wish her and Corby the very best as they enter this next chapter of life spending more time with their children, Casey and Haley, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

RECOGNIZING WWII ARMY PRIVATE WALTER J. KOWALCZYK ON THE 78TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

**HON. BRIAN HIGGINS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 8, 2022*

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifices of Walter J. Kowalczyk, a U.S. Army Private who earned a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart, and a Presidential Unit Citation while serving in the battles following the Invasion of Normandy.

Walter Kowalczyk was born in Niagara Falls in 1916 to Franciszek Kowalczyk and Sophie Smiech, Polish immigrants who had moved to the United States just a few years prior. Walter enlisted in the U.S. Army on April 23, 1941 as part of the Third Battalion, 334th Regiment, of the 84th Infantry Division, more commonly known as the "Railsplitter" division. He served in the European Theater of Operations from December 8, 1944 until September 26, 1945, during which his unit supported troops in Normandy in the aftermath of D-Day.

While serving as a paratrooper in Europe, Private Kowalczyk participated in the battles of Ardennes, Central Europe, and Rhineland. The campaign in Ardennes, otherwise referred to as the "Battle of the Bulge", was carried out from December 16, 1944 to January 25, 1945, and was the last German offensive which resulted in tremendous loss of life.

Later, Private Kowalczyk's unit was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism, gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps under unusually difficult and hazardous conditions during the Battle of Rhineland where he was wounded in action. The citation notes that the unit was assigned to the mission spearheading the advance between the Roer and Rhine rivers. The battalion encountered and defeated considerable enemy resistance, but advanced 42 miles along the banks of the Rhine River in 12 days. During the advance they captured and defended a strategically important German town, as well as several other cities, towns, and villages. Despite little rest and aggressive attacks from the enemy, the Third Battalion, 334th Infantry's conspicuous bravery and dauntless determination played a critical role in the Allied Forces advancement deep into Germany.

Private Kowalczyk was honorably discharged from the military on October 10, 1945 after more than four years of service. After serving, he returned to Niagara County and worked for Tam Ceramics before retiring in 1981. In Western New York he was a member of United Steel Workers, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Lewiston Fire Company No. 1, Power City Lodge, Italian Daughters and Sons of America, and St. Peter's Church. An avid sportsman, he participated in the 3F Sportsmen's Club and became a charter member of the North American Fishing Club. Additionally, he was an active member of the local veteran community, joining Postage Post 146 of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Loyal Order of the Moose, and the Polish Legion of American Veterans.

Private Kowalczyk married Sophie Saleski with whom he had three children: Carol, Chester, and Paul. They also had four grandchildren: Sarah, Michael, Teresa, and Jacquelyn as well as great-grandchildren: Geffory, Maylianna, and Antonio. Walter sadly passed away on November 12, 1993 with the shrapnel that resulted from enemy fire during the Battle of Rhineland still in his body. His legacy continued, however, as his son Chester and grandchildren Sarah and Michael all served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Madam Speaker, I take this moment to recognize the bravery of World War II Army Private Walter J. Kowalczyk.

HONORING BETHLEHEM CHURCH NO. 1 AND 2

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 8, 2022*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable community church, Bethlehem Church No. 1 and 2.

The old Bethlehem No. 1 church was given in 1973 down on Porter's Bayou. The founder of the Bayou was Anderson Robinson. The Robinson's were the first Black family on the Bayou. A letter found written by Martin, recounts that several families suggested a plan to build a Brush Harbor Church in 1888, which was done. Shortly, thereafter, the Bethlehem Church No. 1 was built on land donated by Randall Miller and was pastored by Zachariah Coleman. The No. 2 church was bought from Jeff Arrington and a congregation was formed there in early 1890. The first pastor was Reverend Williams, as mentioned in the letter. The last pastor of the Bethlehem Church No. 2 was Reverend Clarence Hunt, who still lives in Cleveland, Mississippi.

Bethlehem Church No. 2, an old Baptist church, was built in November of 1889. They closed in 2018 due to mold in the church and it was beyond repair. Unfortunately, there were no funds available for the needed repairs, so the decision was made to shut its doors. There are eight church members who joined in with Bethlehem Church No. 1, which is equally historic, about a quarter mile down the road.

When Bethlehem Church No. 2 closed its doors, the church only had a small congregation. There had been a disagreement within

the church for approximately 20 years and many of the members left because of it. Bernice Watts-Griffin, one of the eight people, left as congregants when Bethlehem No. 2 closed in 2018. She had been a member at Bethlehem Church No. 2 for over fifty years. The former church member said, "I was one of the first students to integrate Shaw Public Schools in the mid-1960's and we had many Civil Rights activists in the congregation." Mrs. Griffin was a young girl during that time and do not remember any specific or historic meetings held during that time.

Recently, there has been a discussion about trying to bet the church placed on a historic registry or named a historic site through the state. Hopefully, that comes to fruition. When asked what she would like to see happen to Bethlehem Church No. 2, Watts-Griffin said she wished the church would be formally declared and recognized as a historic building. It is the wish of the former members of Bethlehem Church No. 2 that the property could be repaired, however the damages inside the church would be of tremendous cost. It is with honor and hope to commend the vision of such a remarkable church as Bethlehem Church No. 2, where history is still standing. Although, they have joined with Bethlehem Church No. 1, the churches will continue to serve the community through service and commitment that has sustained the Bethlehem Church No. 2 family throughout this journey, and whose venture is a testament to God's promise of success and longevity to those who diligently seek Him and obey His will.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bethlehem Church No. 2 for their dedication to serving their members and community.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF AUSTIN KOHLHOFER ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

**HON. ROBERT E. LATTA**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 8, 2022*

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Austin Kohlhofer of Delta, Ohio, has been offered an appointment to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

Austin's offer of appointment permits him to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2026. Attending one of our nation's military academies offers the opportunity to serve our country and receive a world-class education. At the same time, these young men and women undertake one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Austin brings a tremendous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2026. While attending Delta High School in Delta, Ohio, Austin participated in student government and was on the honor roll. Throughout high school, Austin was involved with football, wrestling, and track and field, earning varsity letters in all three. I am confident that Austin will carry the lessons of his